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201025Z May 02

2002HANOI01286 - UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED PTQ1356

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ACTION EAP-00

INFO	LOG-00	NP-00	AID-00	AMAD-00	CIAE-00	DODE-00	DOEE-00
	SRPP-00	DS-00	EB-00	ED-01	FBIE-00	UTED-00	VC-00
	HHS-01	H-01	TEDE-00	INR-00	IO-00	LAB-01	L-00
	VCE-00	AC-01	NSAE-00	NSCE-00	OIC-02	OMB-01	OPIC-01
	PA-00	PM-00	PRS-00	ACE-00	P-00	SP-00	SSO-00
	STR-00	TEST-00	TRSE-00	USIE-00	IIP-00	PMB-00	DSCC-00
	PRM-00	DRL-02	G-00	NFAT-00	SAS-00	/011W	
				-----B0E125	201032Z	/38	

FM AMEMBASSY HANOI
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6528
INFO AMCONSUL HO CHI MINH CITY
ASEAN COLLECTIVE
AMEMBASSY BEIJING
USCINCPAC HONOLULU HI

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 HANOI 001286

SIPDIS

STATE FOR EAP/BCLTV

E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PHUM](#) [SOCI](#) [VM](#) [DPOL](#)
SUBJECT: ELECTION DAY IN HANOI

REF: A. HANOI 1250 B. HANOI 1199 C. HANOI 997

1. (U) SUMMARY. AIDED BY UNRELENTING GOVERNMENT
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EXHORTATIONS, VOTER TURNOUTS IN HANOI AND ELSEWHERE IN VIETNAM FOR THE MAY 19 NATIONAL ASSEMBLY ELECTION WERE ALMOST "PERFECT," HOWEVER IMPROBABLE THAT SEEMS TO WESTERN OBSERVERS. MOST VOTING WAS OVER BY 9 OR 10 A.M., ALTHOUGH POLLS WERE REQUIRED TO REMAIN OPEN UNTIL AT LEAST 5 P.M. MANY PEOPLE VOTED BY PROXY; OTHER FAMILY MEMBERS WERE ABLE TO CAST THEIR BALLOTS FOR THEM BY USING THEIR VOTER CARDS, ALTHOUGH THIS IS TECHNICALLY AGAINST THE RULES. RESULTS SHOULD BE AVAILABLE BY THE WEEKEND, BUT IT SHOULD NOT BE MUCH OF A CLIFFHANGER THAT NONG DUC MANH WILL WIN OR THAT COMMUNIST PARTY CANDIDATES WILL WIN BY A LANDSLIDE. END SUMMARY.

2. (U) ACCORDING TO AN OFFICIAL REPORT FROM THE CENTRAL ELECTORAL COUNCIL, 98.45 OF HANOI VOTERS TURNED UP AT THE POLLS FOR THE MAY 19 NATIONAL ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS, BEATING THE NATIONAL AVERAGE OF ABOUT 94 PCT. THE FORMER CAPITAL OF HUE APPARENTLY LED THE NATION WITH AN AMAZING TURN-OUT OF 99.97 PCT OF ELIGIBLE VOTERS, WITH DANANG FOLLOWING AT 99.73 PCT.

3. (U) TRYING BOTH TO MAKE THE DAY AS "FESTIVE" AS PROMISED AND SIMULTANEOUSLY TO "PERSUADE" PEOPLE TO GO VOTE, PUBLIC LOUDSPEAKERS WENT ON FULL BLAST AS SOON AS THE POLLS OPENED AT 7:00 A.M. ALTERNATELY BLARING INVITATIONS TO VISIT THEIR LOCAL POLLING STATIONS AND PLAYING SONGS ASSOCIATED WITH HO CHI MINH (WHOSE BIRTHDAY THE NATION WAS ALSO CELEBRATING), THE CACOPHONY WAS UNAVOIDABLE IN THESE CITY STREETS (AS WELL AS OUR LIVING ROOMS). THE BROADCASTS PETERED OUT IN MID-AFTERNOON. AS THE DAY WORE ON, RADIO PROGRAMMING TURNED FROM THE ELECTION TO REMEMBRANCES OF
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"UNCLE HO," AND LARGE CROWDS GATHERED IN FRONT OF HIS MAUSOLEUM.

4. (U) POLOFFS TRAVELED AROUND THE CITY TO GAUGE PUBLIC ENTHUSIASM. THERE WERE LITERALLY HUNDREDS OF SMALL NEIGHBORHOOD POLLING STATIONS, SOME SET UP IN DISTRICT PEOPLE'S COMMITTEE OFFICES, OTHERS IN SCHOOLS, AND EVEN A FEW IN TEMPLES AND COMMUNAL HALLS. THEY WERE BRIGHTLY DECORATED WITH RED BANNERS AS WELL AS PROMINENTLY PLACED POSTER BOARDS FEATURING THE CANDIDATES' RESUMES AND PHOTOS. CANDIDATES, INCLUDING CONSTITUENCY NUMBER 1'S NONG DUC MANH (BEST KNOWN AS GENERAL SECRETARY OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF VIETNAM), WERE LISTED IN ALPHABETICAL ORDER (BY FIRST NAME). AT NONE OF THE POLLING STATIONS POLOFFS VISITED WERE THE ACTION PROGRAMS OR THE ASSETS DECLARATIONS OF THE CANDIDATES AVAILABLE. SOME VOTERS DID SAY THAT THEY HAD READ THE ACTION PROGRAMS IN THE DAYS BEFORE THE ELECTION, HOWEVER.

